



Real Possibilities

Laura Green, Volunteer State President
Legislative Program Review & Investigations Committee
March 4, 2014

Testimony in Support of:
RE-EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER WORKERS

House Bill # 5375: AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE REEMPLOYMENT OF OLDER WORKERS CONCERNING THE TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM

House Bill # 5376: AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE REEMPLOYMENT OF OLDER WORKERS AS THEY RELATE TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

House Bill # 5377: AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE REEMPLOYMENT OF OLDER WORKERS AS THEY RELATE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

House Bill # 5382: AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE STUDY ON THE REEMPLOYMENT OF OLDER WORKERS AS THEY RELATE TO JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

Good Afternoon, my name is Laura Green and I am the Volunteer State President of AARP CT. I want to thank the Committee and staff for working throughout the last year to tackle the challenges facing older workers throughout CT. AARP CT appreciates the time that the Committee staff spent with our volunteers gaining insights, the extensive research and the resulting comprehensive report.

AARP is a nonpartisan social mission organization with an age 50+ membership of nearly 37 million nationwide, and over 603,000 here in Connecticut. One third of our members are still working. AARP believes that one's possibilities should never be limited by their age and that, in fact, age and experience can expand your possibilities, whether they be personal or professional. AARP is a network of people, tools and information and an ally on issues that affect the lives of our members and the age 50+ population as a whole. These legislative proposals speak to our mission and vision as an organization.

I am here today because whether it is about staying in the workforce or finding work when faced suddenly with unemployment, the issues of employment and financial security are front and center for AARP members and their families in Connecticut. Our members tell us how important financial security is to them, so AARP is dedicated to supporting the efforts of older jobseekers through both public policy changes and through free resources to help individuals navigate career changes, regardless of their circumstances.

Older jobseekers face unique challenges which can contribute to longer periods of unemployment than their younger counterparts. In January, 44 percent of older jobseekers were classified as "long-term unemployed". These older job seekers had been out of work and looking for a job for 27 weeks or more. That's only a small part of the story. Nationally, jobseekers age 55 and up spend an average of 44 weeks, or 11 months, looking for work, as compared to 31 weeks for younger jobseekers. These numbers reflect what we see here in Connecticut, the 7th "oldest" state in the nation.

My own personal experiences in job seeking have opened my eyes. I retired from my job as CEO of a non-profit agency after 17 years. I was 64. I knew I still had more to contribute professionally and, quite frankly, I still needed income to make ends meet so I re-entered the job market looking for a middle management position. I thought that the skills I had developed in people, organizational and financial management were great assets. I remember the countless number of resumes I submitted and the endless networking I did but the thing I remember most was the discouragement. The few interviews I secured were short and perfunctory at best. I expanded my search into the for-profit sector but there was no joy there either.

I spent 2 years questioning myself – Did my resume need to be re-worked for the fortieth time? What skills was I missing in order to secure an interview? Were my skills at being interviewed too rusty? I sought help through the Department of Labor and professional placement agencies but it was clear to me that their resources were geared toward those building a resume and a career rather than toward those of us who are seasoned, highly experienced workers.

I never did figure out what I was doing wrong.

But I believe that the proposed legislation creating easier access to inexpensive re-training programs and assistance in building job seeking skills that are specifically geared to seasoned, experienced workers would have not only helped me to answer my questions but to actually secure a job. And that this legislation will help countless others.

Thank you for your time and consideration. These bills bring important resources to the older jobseeker and will create much needed opportunities for skill development that we hope levels the playing field for older job seekers.

FREE ON LINE RESOURCES FOR JOB SEEKERS, ENTREPRENEURS, AND MORE:

<http://lifereimagined.aarp.org>

<http://www.aarp.org/work/>

<http://www.aarp.org/work/self-employment/>

<http://www.linkedin.com/> Group with professional content, job postings and more: [Life Reimagined for Work](#)